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The Times-Dispatch

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MONDAY, JULY 21, 1913.

WEALTH VS. COMMUNITY SPIRIT.

In chagrin at some of the manifest weaknesses of Virginia to-day, short-sighted critics cry out that times have changed, and that we are falling away from the traditions of the fathers. It is true that in many things we are not as great as of old, but the reason for our present backwardness is often enough not a change from the former social system, but a consequence of that very regime we hear regretted.

For instance, Virginia lacks what is called community spirit. The people do not co-operate for their common good. This lack of social unity is due, we believe, to two things: the past neglect of popular education, and the impress of an individualistic ideal on the State during a century and a half of rule by great landowners. We are paying now for what was once the very source of our leadership.

This quotation from that fascinating and almost too picturesque book, "The End of an Era," by the late John S. Wise, crushes the truth of the case into telling form. Discussing the old regime, he writes:

"It is true that every enterprise dependent upon what is known as public spirit, or originating in the demand or desire for common use, was sadly lacking. Wealthy people seldom co-operated. Each lived for his own things which all might well use in common if the price was an important consideration; and none, perhaps, have as much, or as good, as all might more cheaply obtain if they acted conjointly."

This individualistic viewpoint still exists. In the very heart of movements that demand co-operation, such as those for social betterment and moral uplift, we find the forces split asunder by private ideas of the best way to advance or by personal pride of opinion. Co-operation in agricultural life we miss because the farmer of the old tradition prided himself on the isolation of his estate rather than on its combination with others. He boasted of being able to produce everything and do everything on his own broad acres. He had wealth and power enough to protect himself, but what can the small man of short means do now unless he combines with his fellows?

In schooling, the old ruling class had private tutors for their children or sent them to private schools. The lower classes were few in number and scattered. Only in the last few decades has this great mass of our people learned how to advantage themselves by common schools—schools not for common people, but for common use. In books, we have a striking example here in Richmond. The so-called better class have their own books. They do not have as many or as good, in Wise's language, as they might have by using a common store, but they act along without missing a public library. The people have no books, and have not yet learned that they can have all books by buying them together. When a layman citizen learns more he will demand a library.

A striking illustration of this truth is in public grounds and buildings. No multi-millionaire in Richmond has residential gardens as beautiful and extensive as have the people in Byrd Park. Even wealth cannot buy here the beauty and spaciousness that the people secure by combining. It might be well for the envy of the poor to chew on this salience. It would be well also for this great truth to enter the minds of our people and awaken them to what can really be accomplished by the community spirit.

MELLENISM.

The resignation of President Charles S. Mellen from the New Haven system seems to have been accepted by press and public alike as the only solution of a situation which threatened the transportation facilities of New England and endangered the interests of thousands of stockholders.

Of course, the retirement of Mr. Mellen was inevitable after the Interstate Commerce Commission's findings in the recent investigation of the road. Rightly or wrongly the blame for the embarrassment of the company was placed on the shoulders of the president, and his board of directors had no other course than to accept his resignation.

If the removal of Mr. Mellen from the New Haven means merely the retirement of a man who in doing many good things has made some mistakes, it is of doubtful advantage; but if it means the ending of that type of railroad which his administration of the New Haven embodied, the country should rejoice.

Mellenism was Standardism applied to railroading. Mr. Mellen himself was not primarily responsible. Big money back of him guided his hand. He was a symbol for Rockefeller, Morgan and the financiers. It contemplated not only the operation of a vast system for the greatest possible profit to the shareholders, with but incidental care for the welfare of the public, but it included the stifling of competition, the control of subsidiary lines and the domination of what might be termed the by-products of transportation.

Such a policy, even under the most favorable management, has no place

in our present industrial system. We demand that the shoemaker stick to his last, and we are coming to the point where we insist that the railroad stick to transportation. The long legal war against the Pennsylvania railroads, with their subsidiary coal companies, was the beginning of this demand, and the end is not yet. Willing to give every industry a fair chance in competition with all others, the democratic policy of the day will not countenance monopolistic control of any business or the domination of dependent industries. Mellenism must die stillborn.

WEST END GETTING "STUNG."

We do not want to stir up strife between the parts of this good old town, but we rise to state that the people of the West End are having something slipped over on them by the East End folks. It is time the voters out West woke up and demanded their rights. The Clay Ward Actives had better look into this matter. The East End Citizens' Association must be laughing in its composite sleeve. We do not refer to which end of town is getting the most paving, or how the Fulton Hill dwellers were promised a street car up to their doors—and are still waiting. This is a more serious discrimination than any of these material interests. The East End is getting city help that ought to make the other sections envious.

In short, in the model playground on the Hill, some 500 to 1,000 men, women and children are having a good time day after day. The city is footing the bill—which, goodness be praised, is no insignificant fact that it could be quadrupled with justice. The East End has somewhere to go of nights to get rest and recreation. He has games and dancing, and his children are finding happiness and health under the watchful eyes of trained recreation directors. It is a fine, fine thing, as you can find out by reading a letter on this page from Dr. Gillette, who keeps the South Laurel neighborhood happy by his kindly guardianship.

The West End ought to have a playground, too. They pay taxes, and their children are just as good as anybody's. You remember what happened in Chicago? They opened a playground for poor children, and the poor children had such a good time that all the rich children started kicking until they got playgrounds, too. Thank fortune, there is no class of rich and poor here. Yet we hope the good average folks of one end will demand from the Council this same beautiful adjunct to their lives now so successfully in operation at the other end.

GAGGING THE PRESS.

The high-handed attempt of the Mayor of Seattle to prevent the publication of the Times, in that city, is but another of an alarming series of efforts made in recent months to gag the press—efforts which mean even more to the public than to the newspapers affected. The remarkable contempt proceedings against Colonel Nelson, of Kansas City, and the jailing of a New Jersey Socialist editor are closed incidents; the outcome of the Seattle episode is still to develop.

Every one realizes, of course, that in times of great excitement a newspaper has as much trouble as an individual in keeping its temper, and may occasionally exceed the bounds of proper criticism. But the country can well afford to endure this—especially since we have adequate laws of libel—for the sake of having a press free at all times to speak its mind in behalf of the public and against injustice. Unjust criticism is preferable to the gag. But now that public servants have taken upon themselves the task of jailing editors who are outspoken, and of prohibiting the publication of papers which are hostile, the time has come to test again before the Supreme Court the provisions of the first amendment. If the Constitution does not mean what it says, the newspapers and the reading public should know it. If a newspaper may not criticize a judge for an unjust and prejudiced opinion, the people should keep that fact in mind and read the papers accordingly. If the existing laws permit the gagging of the press, let us understand that fact fully and go to work to remove the gag! A free people demand a free press.

DEAD MEN'S BONES.

There is a certain uncanny interest about the report that the bones of Christopher Columbus are still resting in Santa Domingo. Men who would not walk half a block to see a monument to the great discoverer or leave the afternoon paper to read a newly-discovered letter of the admiral, will discover just what they are in the Western World.

Personally we are of somewhat the same mind with Huck Finn, when he learned that Moses had been dead a long time—we have no particular interest in dead men's bones. And this is not because we lack reverence for the past, but because we are a little suspicious of the story and a little fearful that we may be called on to bow in reverence over bones whose owner no man can name.

Our readers have not forgotten the excitement with which the American people received the report that Ambassador Tower had discovered in a Brazilian cemetery the very bones of that who announced to the British commander that he had "just begun to fight." We were glad to welcome John Paul Jones back to America, even if he came in a box, and we gave him honored sepulture in the new chapel at Annapolis. But since that time there has been more than one report that we had hauled across seas the dust of some worthy man, perhaps, but of some man unknown. It was the same with the alleged skull of Cromwell, over which English democrats wept for years.

Now and then, of course, we can uncover the dust of men whose identity is beyond question. There was little doubt as to the authenticity of

the mummy which Egyptologists told us was that of Rameses II.; there was even less doubt that the grisly skeleton which archaeologists uncovered in the town at Alox—ancient Aachen—was that of the magnificent Charles the Great, still clothed in his robes of state.

In the main, however, we are suspicious of such relics, and we would suggest a thorough investigation before we honor the alleged ashes of Columbus.

A SERVANTS' BUREAU.

Housewives of Richmond, does the following bit of advice from the Newport News Press suggest anything to you?

Some time ago we advised the housewives of Newport News to get together and import a colony of domestic servants. The opportunity is now knocking at the door, according to a statement in our news columns. It is an opportunity that should be improved. The colored cooks' trust must be broken.

We imagine the cost of living, the latest fashions and the servant question are the three daily vexatious problems that the women of this city concern themselves with. The amount of nerve energy, worry, fret, sacrifice and money expended during a twelve-month by the woman who has to get a servant and keep her would run many a man's business for half a year. Isn't it time some of the thinking women attacked this fundamental problem, and began to get their own houses in order before going out to clean up the whole community? Settling the servant question on a business basis would about qualify the women to vote.

There is, so far as we know, no cooks' trust here. There might very well be a housewives' trust. The remedy suggested by our friend near the coast is to import foreign domestics. That reads well, but by the time we get them here, break them in, provide housing, and settle the range of possible squabbles with the colored population, we would be worse off than before. Also, a trained servant in the North gets real wages. Our economic status would not permit of the prices paid the best white help. So when we get them, and broke them to our ways, the first thing a competent girl would be doing would be seeking a better job elsewhere.

No, our problem is that of making the best of what we have. Negroes make good servants. The tradition runs strong in them. The troubles are laziness, shiftlessness and lack of a sense of responsibility. The thing to seek is a way of training them and of inculcating the right virtues. We suggest a servants' bureau, conducted by a paid manager under the supervision of some sort of a Housewives' League. This institution could list servants, recommend them, and, perhaps, guarantee them. It could also prevent careless women from accepting servants who have failed to treat other employers properly. This scheme would enable the employers to get a line on their people, and also help the good negro by protecting her against the competition of the inferior and worthless.

LITTLE NEMO ET AL.

We have been glad to receive a number of favorable comments on our present comic section, and particularly on the weekly adventures of Little Nemo, the dreamer. Numbers of our friends have commented on the artistic character of these drawings and their freedom from those faults which mark so many such comic sketches.

The whole problem of a comic section is troublesome to any newspaper. A very large element of our readers are extremely fond of the colored section, and, indeed, often look at it before they read the news. Others have been led to believe that some of the comics offered by certain of our contemporaries are not calculated to improve the youngsters who pore over them every week. Forced to print a comic section, therefore, and not always able to get the character of work it wants, the newspaper is embarrassed.

We are hoping that the solution of the problem lies in the publication of such comics as those which depict the adventures in the Land of Wonderful Dreams—comics which have imaginative power and artistic worth, without being in any way offensive. In fact, we are coming to believe that just here is one of the most promising fields of missionary art-endeavor. If the people will study comics where they will not look at serious pictures, why should not artists adapt themselves to the situation and teach their lessons of art in the color pictures which adorn every Sunday paper? A sermon can be preached in a stone as well as in a pulpit, in a comic drawing as well as in a salon picture.

If Richmond cannot qualify in the summer resort class, we can certainly offer nice natural Turkish baths.

The leaders in Capitol Park don't have to worry about "sleeping porches." They just use an evening paper for a folding bed, and leave a "call" with the squirrels.

President Wilson's Cabinet seems a Pandora's box right now.

Can it be that Federal "plans" are going begging in Virginia because they are not quite ripe enough?

The program of the Sunday band performance does not suggest a sacred concert.

Even if the secret code of the United States is in the hands of Huerta, he will not learn anything worse about himself than what has already been said publicly.

Rockefeller has given \$100,000,000 to fight anemia. Now for eight billion to eradicate plain laziness.

The taps are fomenting trouble in the Chinese republic. Send the California Legislature over there at once.

"September Morn" looks right much like to live.

On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

From the Hickeyville Chronicle. Mr. and Mrs. Hank Tumms are takin' in summer boarders, and them as are taken in there once are never taken in there again.

Sam Hardy went to a store to buy a shirt, and the clerk tried to sell him one with a stiff bosom, but Lem couldn't take it. He had been sick and the doctor ordered him to avoid anything with starch in it.

Ab, Summer Here at Last. Nantucket, July 20.—A monstrous sea serpent with a large horn in the middle of his back and a forked tongue seventeen feet long by actual measurement, was seen sporting in the water about five miles off this port this morning. It did not attract much attention, as the natives here are used to sea serpents. This serpent has a nose like a horse and a voice like a circus elephant. It is believed to be 118 feet in length.

Atlantic City, July 20.—A school of singing fish has appeared off the coast here, and the fish entertain the resorters every night with sweet music, singing many of the classics and lulling the city visitors to sleep. There are believed to be more than 4,500 fish in the school, which is one of the largest schools of singing fish ever seen in this locality, even by the old inhabitants. There are several inhabitants here are more than a hundred years of age.

The Diary of a Housewife.

More than a hundred to a young chicken than to any other form of animal life, unless, perhaps, to a Mexican revolutionist.

Every man has two consuming ambitions in life. One is to be rich. When he is a kid, he wants to play in the band, and when he grows up he wants to raise chickens. Playing in the band is by far the cheaper, even if a man plays a diamond-studded cornet. Almost anything, in fact, is cheaper than raising chickens.

To-day I record in my faithful diary the fact that I am cured of the chicken habit. To-day I gave the last few remnants of my flock and three perfectly good incubators to a man who signed a bond to the effect that he would not bring them back.

For twenty years I wanted to raise chickens. I considered the price of eggs and fowls on the open market and figured out a fortune amounting to nearly \$3,000,000 for myself. In my mind, I arranged to care for all of the poor relations and to endow three or four orphan asylums. I also figured for myself four automobiles.

It would have been cheaper for me if I had bought the automobiles first, for I could have gained a life every five minutes, and then not have spent as much money as I did on the chickens.

What I did not know about chickens when I started to raise them would have killed President Wilson's five feet of books. What I do not know about raising chickens now would fill ten feet of books. The more you experiment with chickens the less you know about them. A young chick is a cross between a sensitive plant and an impatient presidential boom. It generally dies a-borning. The main ambition of a young chicken is to die. If it could die before it is born, it would be supremely happy. The only happy young chickens are those found in the cemeteries.

The young chickens I had were the worst pessimists I ever saw. There was nothing that could do to brighten their drooping spirits, although I tried everything, even to sitting out in the chicken yard on bright moonlight nights and playing the mandolin.

They soon acquired the custom of rubbing it in by waddling right out in front of me as I played the mandolin and dying right before my eyes. My growing chickens spent all of their time in the highest tower and vegetable gardens, and seemed to be imbued with the spirit of race suicide. I could almost have believed them to be French chickens, born, raised and educated in Paris.

The man who took my chickens off my hands is a poor man, and I feel sorry for him, but self-preservation is the first law of nature. It was either letting him go, or, after talking it over to some length, my wife and I decided to let him go.

The next time I want to get rich quick I am going to ship Swiss cheese to Switzerland, or start a ice wagon route at the north pole. There is more money in anything else than there is in chickens, for a man who doesn't understand the business, and where a man doesn't understand it he is so old that he is not greatly interested in anything. I think Methusalem might have had time to learn the chicken business.

Voice of the People

The Joyous Playground. To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir.—Last night I visited the model playground at Chimborazo Park. Any

citizen interested in the great uplift movement, through playgrounds, will be well repaid by making such a visit. As nearly as I could judge, there were 600 to 700 people on the grounds and hill overlooking the grounds. What families were there—grandfathers, children and grandchildren—thoroughly enjoying themselves. The swings and seesaws, sliding boards and giant slides were in constant use. Basketball and running long jumps over a lapped each other for lack of room, but perfect good-natured, courteous consideration avoided any collisions. Folk dancing, three groups at a time, in space too crowded for best results, was going full blast. The children are catching the dances with marvelous rapidity, and old and young danced together in joyous forgetfulness of the world's more serious cares.

As far as I could see, there was perfect order. And being accustomed to inclosed grounds, over which we have absolute control, I have a pretty high ideal of order. The crowd was naturally enjoying itself. In their enjoyment, at peace with the world, the members were considerate ladies and gentlemen. I was told there was a gang of two of young toughs on the ground. I never should have discovered it. They had simply been absorbed by the fascinat of the world, a part of a good-natured, orderly crowd. The working force seemed to have entered into the spirit of the movement, and to have realized that they were engaged in a missionary movement of a very high order for the moral, mental and physical uplift of Richmond. The divine spirit of play is educational in the most wholesome sense of the word.

Any father sit down and carefully calculate how extensive a good collegiate education he could give his son on the magnificent sum of 10 cents per annum. Yet, on an appropriation of \$5,500 for 125,000 people, about 4 cents per annum per capita, Richmond expects a handful of earnest young people to equip new playgrounds, amuse the people, raise the moral tone of the city and furnish a successful demonstration of the educational value of play. Let any one who is disposed to find fault with any feature of the present playground effort, before he expresses an opinion, take fifty children off on a picnic for just one day, footing the bill. Then sit down and carefully figure out how far he would have gotten if he had attempted to give them the same good time on the 25th part of 6 cents per child. If he can't figure it out satisfactorily let him put his shoulder to the wheel, and help the present management in its earnest, honest efforts to make good, even on this meagre allowance.

Yours very truly,
W. W. GILLETTE.
225 South Cherry Street.

Help Whites by Giving Negroes a Park. To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir.—Would it not be a good idea to have some of this city's officials visit Gamble's Hill Park on any Sunday afternoon, so that they might see why the city is in need of parks for the negroes? It is a shame and disgrace the way these negroes are allowed to take possession of this park. It is not safe for our girls and ladies to visit this beautiful little park on Sunday afternoons.

Last Sunday two negro girls about twelve years of age had a fight on the

A CHAT WITH THE FARMER.

By John T. McCutcheon.

[Copyright, 1913, By John T. McCutcheon.]



"Well, sir, things are looking pretty lively over in the Balkans now, aren't they?"



"I hope those barbarous Bulgarians will be suppressed and peace restored over there, don't you?"



"It seems as if everything were wrong these days—graft and corruption everywhere, wars, and all that. Awful state of affairs, isn't it?"



"How are crops looking down in this neighborhood now?"

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